'Pizza is better than Easter eggs'



LOCAL



Caldera Residents Action Group president John Donvito and protesters outside Tweed Shire Council chambers yesterday. Picture: Tweed Daily News

Nightcap village is GO

by Peter Caton

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A CONTROVERSIAL new township west of Mount Warning was last night given the green light by Tweed Shire councillors despite pandemonium erupting in a packed public gallery.



the 1000-person "Nightcap Village" which would be flanked by the Nightcap and Border Ranges halfway between Murwillumbah and Nimbin.

Cr van Lieshout did not attend the special council meeting after declaring a conflict of interest. It was called after the NSW Land and Environment Court threatened to intervene if the council delayed a decision on the three-year-old proposal any longer.

Seven speakers opposed to the project and two supporting it addressed councillors before it was put to an ini- tial vote. Only Cr Longland, who lives in nearby Uki, and Greens Party councillor Katie Milne voted to reject the application - prompting the public gallery uproar.

Afterwards the councillors added a swathe of extra conditions which could still be contested in the Land and Environment Court.

They include:

- A $200,000 bank guarantee to be held until 100 premises are connected to a sewage treatment system to ensure the system is maintained.
- Extension of a ban on dogs and cats to include prohibition of rabbits, ferrets and hard-hoofed animals such as horses, cows and goats on the site.
- A requirement for consultation with the Aboriginal community after each stage of earthworks.
- All village greens, sports fields, market areas and streets to be named from the local Aboriginal dialect with an English translation provided underneath on each sign.
- Ban on exotic creepers and vines.
- Action to be taken to protect the area's giant barred frog.

Among objectors to address the council was existing nearby resident Jenny Pearson who warned the village would be the first stage of a bigger town in the rural district.

"It's going to end up full of heroin users en route between the Gold Coast and Nimbin," she added.

Several speakers alleged that Mr van Lieshout had clear-felled forested areas, but that was disputed by Mr Warburton who, after pleading with Cr Longland to control the meeting so he could be heard, said the property was "a showpiece for conservation".

Protester Peter Smith said the village was "one man's dream" opposed to hundreds of objections. But Murwillumbah resident Lisa Townsend said unlike huge projects planned near the coast Nightcap Village would be "much more sustainable".


